

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

S.B. 778  
By: West  
Education  
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As Filed

### **DIGEST**

Currently, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) deals with school districts on a daily basis, attends meetings on school bus safety and transportation requirements, and compiles information from school districts relating to both student and bus safety. School districts currently have the authority to purchase buses themselves or through the General Services Commission (GSC). Although GSC's primary role is to assist school districts with purchasing buses, there has been some concern as to whether or not GSC has the authority to inspect a bus purchased by school districts. S.B. 778 would require TEA, with the advice of the Department of Public Safety, to establish safety standards for school buses.

### **PURPOSE**

As proposed, S.B. 778 outlines provisions regarding safety standards for school buses.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is granted to the Texas Education Agency under SECTION 1 (Section 547.7015(a), Transportation Code) of this bill.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 34.002(a) and (b), Education Code, to require the Texas Education Agency (TEA), rather than the General Services Commission, with the advice of the Department of Public Safety (department), to establish safety standards for school buses, rather than motor vehicles, used to transport students in accordance with Sections 547.701 and 547.7015, Transportation Code, rather than Section 105, Article 6701d, V.T.C.S. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 547L, Transportation Code, by adding Section 547.7015, as follows:

Sec. 547.7015. RULES RELATING TO SCHOOL BUSES. Requires TEA, with the advice of the department, to adopt and enforce rules governing the design, color, lighting and other equipment, construction, and operation of a school bus for the transportation of schoolchildren that is owned and operated by a school district in this state or privately owned and operated under a contract with a school district in this state. Requires TEA to emphasize safety features and long range, maintenance-free factors in adopting rules under this section. Provides that rules adopted under this section apply to each school district, the officers and employees of a district, each person employed under contract by a school district, and is required, by reference, to be made a part of any contract that is entered into by a school district in this state for the transportation of schoolchildren on a privately owned school bus.

SECTION 3. (a) Provides that SECTION 2 of this Act, in adding Section 5477015, Transportation Code, conforms to changes in the laws made by Section 56, Chapter 260, Acts of the 74th Legislature, Regular Session, 1995.

(b) Repealer: Section 56, Chapter 260, V.T.C.S. (Conforming Amendment).

(c) Provides that this Act prevails over another Act of the 75th Legislature, Regular Session, to the extent of any conflict.

SECTION 4. Provide that all rules adopted by the general Services Commission establishing safety standards for school buses are continued in effect as rules of TEA until superseded by a rule of TEA.

SECTION 5. Emergency clause.

Effective date: upon passage.